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method has been applied to the physiology of animals by Pflüger. The present pamphlet is a contribution to this endeavor by Dr. Loeb, whose special object has been to determine the laws of the restoration of lost organs in animal organisms. Botanists have found that if a plant that has undergone the loss of an organ has to build it up again, the new organ will be different from the original organ, and this difference can be determined by law. Dr. Loeb inquires whether the same can be said of the reconstruction of the lost organs of animals.

There are, as a rule, in animal organisms two poles, viz. the oral pole, forming the head, and the aboral forming the tail. It has been generally supposed that living animal substance possesses the tendency to develop in one special direction oral organs, and in the other aboral organs. This was called Polarity and is based upon the experiments of Allman, Trembley, Dalyell, and others. The experiments of Dr. Loeb, made with the view of testing the polarity theory, show that it is possible to develop in animals possessing physiologically distinct heads and tails, heads instead of tails in the aboral pole, and to do so without any serious interference with the vitality of the creature. The experiments have been made chiefly on *Tubula in mesembryanthemum*, *Aglaophenia pluma*, *Plumularia pinnata*, and other species.

Dr. Loeb proves by his experiments that external conditions control the reproduction of organs, so that artificially oral organs can be made to grow where aboral organs have been, and *vice versa*. It is this faculty of animal organisms which Dr. Loeb calls *heteromorphosis*.

KP.

DIE ETHISCHE BEWEGUNG IN DER RELIGION. By *Stanton Coit*, Ph. D. Uebersetzung von Georg von Gazycki. Leipsic: O. R. Reisland.

This series of Sunday lectures by Dr. Stanton Coit, the speaker of the South Place Ethical Society of London, England, has been translated into German, in the shape it is now before us, by Dr. Coit's friend and teacher Prof. George von Gazycki; they have not yet appeared in English. The South Place Ethical Society is not directly affiliated to the Ethical Societies of North America, but it stands with them in friendly relations. Dr. Coit, a native American, is strongly biased in his views by his American co-workers; he is the youngest among them, and is, I believe, to be considered as a disciple of Professor Adler. He has inherited from Professor Adler the idea that we can have ethics without a world-conception or a religion; yet this idea has been considerably modified, and an approach to more positive and practical views is perceptible in many passages of his sermons.

In the lecture "Which Ethics?" Dr. Coit says: "We need (*bedürfen*) a theory concerning the universe and our position in it instead of the old faith." Yet in contradiction to this, he declares that theories are of little use. He adds: "If two men come down from their abstract theories into real life and to the forces which create action, it is as if they descend from two opposite mountain peaks into a warm and rich valley where rivulets run down from both sides to unite their waters inseparably into one continuous stream."

Is not this beautiful allegory, true as it certainly is in one sense, after all misleading? Is not theory and theory different? If theory means mere speculation, we heartily agree with the proposition to keep clear of and far away from theorising. It is at best a harmless play, and certainly a loss of valuable time. Yet if theory means methodical systematisation of facts, it is not mere waste of time; in that case it is the indispensable condition of all truly practical work. And it is this latter kind of theory which also in the practical work of ethical culture must be sought to be established. We must at least be clear as to basic principles so that the efforts of ethical teachers may not be at random, but directed by the progressive spirit of the age in harmony with our best scientific and philosophic thought.

Concerning religion Dr. Coit says (p. 19) in his article "Why Ethics Instead of Religion": "My own opinion is that there is one feature which distinguishes Religion from all other doctrines, ceremonies, and rules. This feature characterised Matthew Arnold's view. For he insisted not only upon morals and their importance, and thought of means for their propagation, but he proclaimed also that there was a power above the will of man to which he must bow. In the very moment he proposed that power which we have to obey, his ethics became religious. . . . But the recognition of this higher power, if I am allowed to propose my own views, appears to me of very little importance."

If there is such a power, and we have sufficient reasons not to doubt its existence, I should say that for ethical purposes it is of paramount importance to recognise it and to obey it. In another and a more recent lecture, Dr. Coit pronounces a very different view, he says:

"Anybody who has ever reflected a moment, must have discovered how dependent he is upon a power outside of his own will. He has no strength either for good or for evil, which he has made himself. The more he thinks about it, the deeper must become the feeling of his dependence. And being aware that God, or whatever we call that power in all things, does not mind his whims, he will find it easier not to mind, himself, his own whims. The constant thought that we are not the powers of life and death, will take away conceit and vanity and foolishness. And in this way, it brings us in times of tribulation to a quick resignation. It makes us loving brothers and sons."

Dr. Coit indeed aspires to make of ethical culture a religion for the people. He speaks on this subject in his last lecture. He opposes the Churches for mixing their ethics with theology, and he speaks with great enthusiasm about the poetry of ethics, which is much more powerful than the prose of ethics. He does not seem to see that the influence of the churches is mainly due to their poetry of ethics. Would it not be advisable to point out the prosaic truth in this poetry for the purpose of freeing the human mind of the obnoxious elements of a misunderstood poetry? Would it not be advisable to investigate the poetry of the basic idea in ethics, viz., of the God-idea, so as to let the ethical movement develop itself his-

torically from the past. Dr. Coit's method of dealing with the God-idea is far from satisfactory. He is neither a theist nor an atheist. Sometimes he appears to appreciate the moral importance of the God-idea in its purified shape, and then again he seems to consider it as an ethically indifferent idea. Should not this problem be settled by every one who undertakes to preach ethics. It appears almost as if all the leaders of the ethical culture societies underrated the ethical importance and indispensableness of thought in general and of science and philosophy in particular.

The contradictions which appear in Dr. Coit's lectures show that he is still developing. The book is full of promise and we have every reason to hope that its author will overcome the uncleanness that is still lurking in his mind, and that he will grow with the work he is doing.

KPC.

FREMDES UND EIGENES AUS DEM GEISTIGEN LEBEN DER GEGENWART. By Prof.

Dr. Ludwig Büchner. Leipsic: Max Spohr.

Opinions admittedly are still divided with respect to the laudable efforts of a large class of scientists and writers whose main object is that of presenting the results of scientific research in an intelligible, popular form. Every department of the natural sciences, geology, astronomy, even psychology and comparative philology, each and all, are now represented by able and ardent popular interpreters, who at the same time by their aggressive style and by their polemical methods not unfrequently seem to impart a kind of militant and apostolic attitude to the cause of science. It must further be admitted, that many of these writers, by the unanimous verdict of the present age, are among the most instructive, readable, and actually the most widely read authors of contemporaneous German, French, and Anglo-American literature. At first glance, it accordingly may seem rather strange, that these same popular authors should also be subjected, not unfrequently, to their commensurate share of unfair, and even offensive, popular criticism; and yet it could hardly be otherwise.

The well-known writer of these scientific and critical essays, Prof. Ludwig Büchner, affords an exceptionally striking instance of the unenviable lot of some of our most popular writers of science. In one of these essays inscribed "Meine Philosophie," Professor Büchner has been compelled to defend the arduous work of his laborious life against a decidedly unfriendly and unappreciative criticism of his philosophy and whole scientific activity, that some time ago appeared in the American *Freidenker* of Milwaukee. Prof. Büchner, with a touch of legitimate bitterness, repudiates the imputation of having been, or still being, as he himself calls it, only the "popularisator," expounder and commentator, of the theories and systems of other thinkers; that, on the contrary, in Germany and elsewhere, among the highest representatives of science, for more than thirty years Professor Büchner himself has been recognised and honored as an original worker and thinker. His book on "Force and Matter" (*Kraft und Stoff*) was published five years before Darwin's great work on the "Origin of Species." Subsequently his well-known